

February 19, 2009

Written Testimony regarding  
H.B. No. 6336 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NURSES  
PURSUING ADVANCED DEGREES

To the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee:

Good Afternoon Senator Handley, Representative Willis and members of the committee, I am Stephen Wallace, of Litchfield, CT. I am a Registered Nurse, an employee of the Hospital of Central Connecticut at Bradley Memorial and a student in the Master of Nursing degree program at the University of Hartford. I would like to provide testimony today regarding H.B. No. 6336 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING NURSES PURSUING ADVANCED DEGREES.

During this session, several bills were proposed (SB 4 and SB 11, for instance) with a goal of providing financial assistance to future nursing educators, in an attempt to address the ongoing nursing shortage. In light of the current budgetary shortfall and economic hardships, it is understandable to have changed the focus of these bills from a monetary one to that of research. However, the nursing workforce shortage persists and is projected to worsen, as our state's population ages.

Therefore, it is prudent and imperative to consider ways to actually provide funding for, while the legislated Allied Health Workforce policy Board continues investigating workforce issues. It would seem reasonable to consider recommending an approach to seeking funding from existing revenue allocation; such as dedicating a percentage of revenue generated by license renewal fees to be earmarked for nursing education initiatives. Furthermore, it would seem to be of tremendous value to include the insight and knowledge of healthcare leadership in further discourse and decisions related to this and other legislation designed to help solve the allied health care workforce shortage. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Stephen Wallace, RN